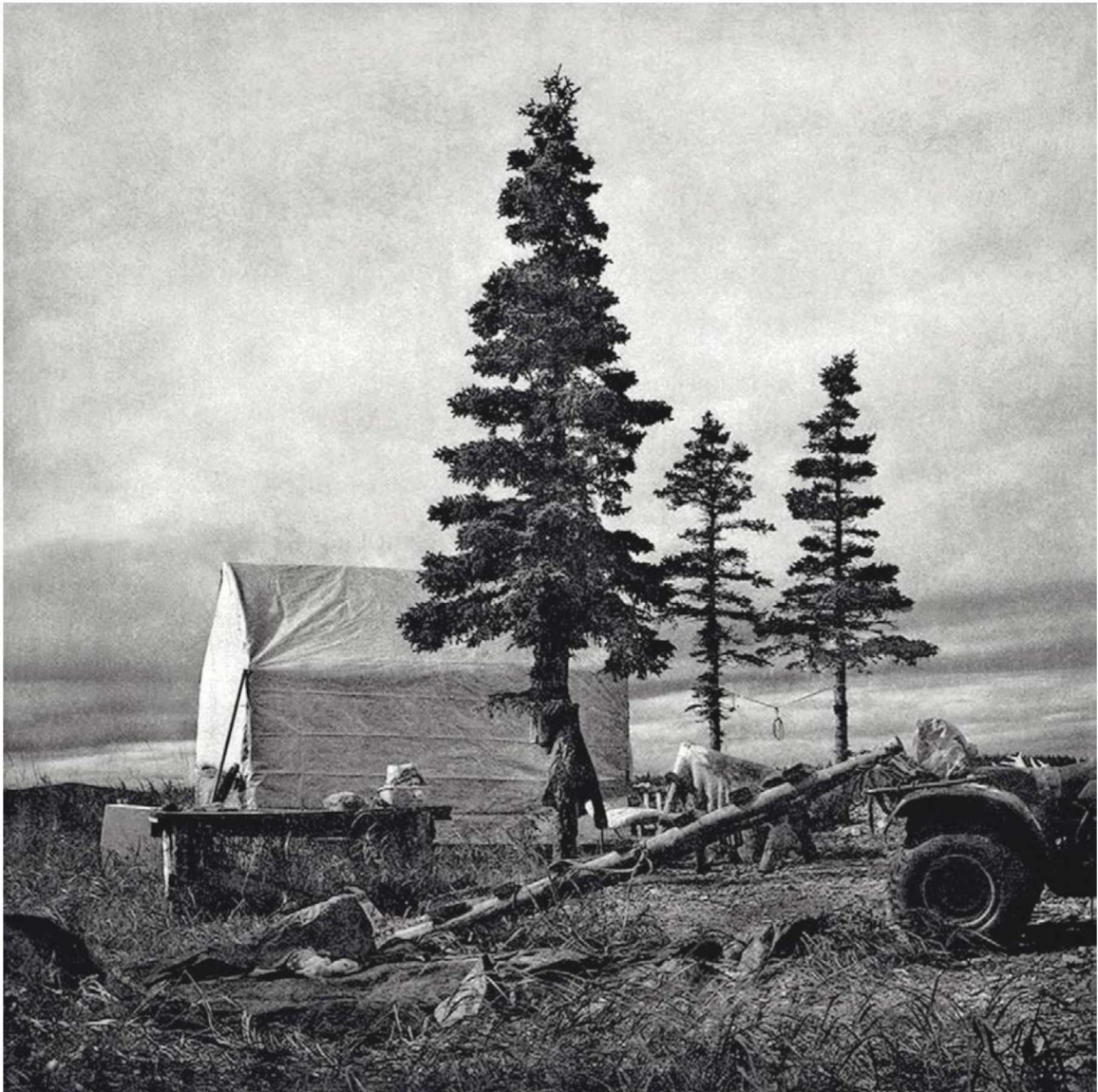


ARCTIC ENTRY

Kuskokwim River Photogravures



Tent with Tree, Copperplate Photogravure, 2014

Alice Bailey

Signature Page

by

Alice Bailey

RECOMMENDED:

Mareca Guthrie, Advisory Committee Member

Da-kakeen Mehner, Advisory Committee Member

David Mollett, Advisory Committee Member

Charles Mason, Advisory Committee Chair

David Mollett, Chair, UAF Department of Fine Arts

APPROVED:

Todd Sherman, Dean, UAF College of Liberal Arts

Dr. John C. Eichelberger, Dean, UAF Graduate School

Date

Art Department Check List Sheet for M.F.A. Students

Student: _____

Show Title: _____

Major area: _____

Minor area: _____

Committee's Initials	Chair	M#1	M#2	M#3
Thesis Exhibition & Defense	_____	_____	_____	_____
Thesis Presentation	_____	_____	_____	_____
Thesis Report, typed on good paper, double-spaced.	_____	_____	_____	_____
Number of pages: _____				
Artist's Statement	_____	_____	_____	_____
Resume	_____	_____	_____	_____
Announcement Cards	_____	_____	_____	_____
Archival CD/DVD.	_____	_____	_____	_____
Contact Sheet with titles, sizes, year	_____	_____	_____	_____
Number of Images: _____				
At least ten high quality color laser prints of	_____	_____	_____	_____
images from show on 8.5x11" paper.				
Number of images: _____				
Photo of Student	_____	_____	_____	_____

M.F.A. Committee Members	Printed Name	Signature	Date
Committee Chair:	_____	_____	_____
Member #1 (M#1):	_____	_____	_____
Member #2 (M#2):	_____	_____	_____
Member #3 (M#3):	_____	_____	_____
Department Chair:	_____	_____	_____

ARCTIC ENTRY
Kuskokwim River Photogravures

Presented to the Faculty
of the University of Alaska Fairbanks

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of

MASTER OF FINE ARTS

By

Alice Bailey

Fairbanks, Alaska

May 2014

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I was able to pursue my interest in copperplate photogravure with Dean Todd Sherman’s encouragement and funding from Anderson Ranch Arts Center, the UAF Graduate School, the Journalism Department, and the Art Department. I also appreciate Lothar Osterburg sharing his knowledge with me.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the Alaska Department of Fish Division of Commercial Fisheries and Game, Sarah Brown, the Esai family, Steven Wyatt Hall II, my parents, and my sister for their ongoing support.

My Master of Fine Arts Thesis Project is the result of three years of making photographs on the Kuskokwim River in Western Alaska, where I focused on creating images of subjects I naturally responded to. I was introduced to the area in 2009 when I started working for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. The resilience, knowledge, and practicality of the Yup'ik and Athapaskan people inspired me to continue working and photographing in the area. I chose to use the M.F.A. program at the University of Alaska as an opportunity to study and photograph how objects, structures, and other physical evidence represent the layers and richness of modern life in Bethel and nearby communities.

The title *Arctic Entry* refers to my introduction to the area and intent behind my work. An *arctic entry* is a term used for an enclosed porch commonly attached onto Alaskan homes. This buffer zone further insulates the home and is a convenient place to store household items such as chest freezers, perishable food, outerwear, tanned hides, and the day's catch before it is prepared for dinner. When I was employed as a surveyor collecting subsistence salmon harvest data, I went through about twenty arctic entries per day. At first I was hesitant to walk uninvited through this bridge between public and private life in order to reach the interior door where the people inside could hear me knocking. However, the longer I worked in the area the more comfortable I became, in the same way that my photographs have developed from depicting non-organic objects to the trappings of domestic life.

The two *Pipes* images below illustrate the transformation that resulted from the historical photo-etching process that I chose for the final printing of my M.F.A. Thesis Exhibition. The image on the left is the original photograph I made in 2011 in Bethel, the largest community and "hub" of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta with the most infrastructures. (Fig. 1) I was fascinated by the animate quality of the mound reminiscent of a wriggling mass of earthworms: the ring-like texture, one end peeking over an adjacent Connex, and the chain-link fence enclosing them all. The perfectly smooth steel fuel tanks juxtaposed in the background enhanced the subject's alien, organic nature even more.

I was disappointed in my digital print because it failed to convey the

experience that compelled me to make the photograph. However, when I transformed the image into a *copperplate photogravure*, I was excited how the enhanced texture and richness seemed to lift the subject right off the page, and portray the “earthworms” as I saw them. (Fig. 2)



Figure 1. Alice Bailey, *Pipes*, pigment ink print, 2011.

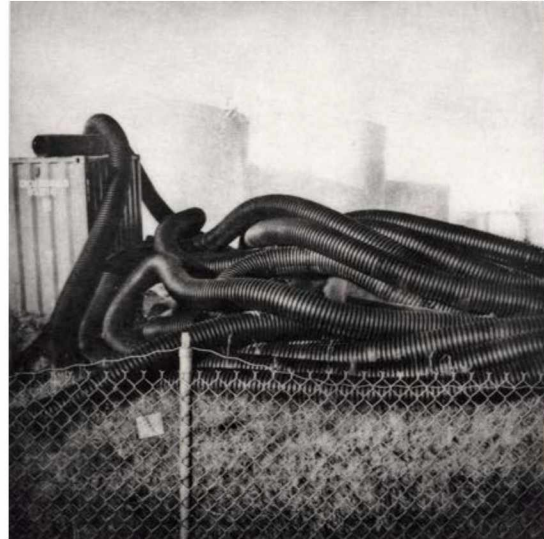


Figure 2. Alice Bailey, *Pipes*, copperplate photogravure, 2014.

Background

I owe my initial introduction to photography as art-making practice to William Wylie, my professor at the University of Virginia from 2002 to 2005. I had never taken a photography course in high school or college, just a few painting classes. When Wylie asked why I changed my focus from environmental studies to studio art, I responded that I had realized the importance of paying attention to the impulses that excited me in the world and realizing them visually. The most immediate way to do so was with a camera. In addition to learning how to capture what I responded to, I wanted to learn more about my identity through my interactions with the landscape. Of course, the pile of 4x6-inch Kodak prints that I showed him that day lacked technical skill, but he accepted me into the beginning photography course, regardless.

At first, I thought I needed to make blurry, subjective images to reference my experience of place. My senior thesis show was a series of large-scale color pinhole photographs of an abandoned house that I visited every weekend during the academic year. I projected my feelings of isolation and fear onto the site by manipulating the properties of the film with long exposures. In a way, I was still approaching photography like painting, where every mark was something I created. Even now, I see that the dark emotional quality of the work more about my state of mind than the place itself.

As a result of the pinhole project, I wanted to learn how other artists depicted their experiences of place. I learned from Robert Adams that even the most objective images reveal the beauty that a photographer sees in the world. Having grown up in the Western South Dakota, I understood the tragedy of the urban sprawl depicted in *The New West*. The stark, high contrast black and white photographs seem terrifying examples of our disregard for wilderness, yet Adams' precision simultaneously gives these alien objects importance.



Figure 3. Robert Adams, *Colorado Springs*, 1979



Figure 4. William Wylie, *01-83*, 2001.

Perhaps the artist's conflicting emotion gives the work this potency and complexity:

Though Robert Adams' book assumes no moral postures, it does have a moral. Its moral is that the landscape is, for us, the place we live. If we have

used it badly, we cannot scorn it, without scorning ourselves. If we have abused it, broken its health, and erected upon it's memorials to our ignorance, it is still our place, and we must learn to love it.¹

I identified with the difficulty of accepting how we change the natural environment from growing up near Mount Rushmore and Crazy Horse National Monuments. These immense carvings always seemed displaced in the Black Hills and I never learned how to accept their presence. Even though I am not attracted to these forms specifically, Adams' work has helped me realize the odd beauty of other objects placed in the landscape.



Figure 5. Alice Bailey, *Marshmallow Tank*, Copperplate Photogravure, 2014.

The quiet intensity of William Wylie's photographs reveals that such quality of attention relies on the artist's awareness of his individual relationship with place. Late one summer evening in Bethel, I thought of his portraits of marble blocks excavated in Carrara, Italy. The powerful simplicity of his approach, each block centered in the frame and approached directly, as well as Wylie's attention to detail, precise use of light and shadow, and tightly rendered compositions enhance the

¹ John Szarkowski, *Forward to Robert Adams, The New West* (New York: Aperture Foundation, 2008), ix.

individuality of each subject. The occasional inclusion of a ladder or other prop places the blocks in the larger context of the quarry and the *cavatori* workers whose families have worked there for generations.

As I stood before a drastically different subject in Bethel, I knew that I needed to employ all of my skills as a photographer to effectively share what I found beautiful in a fuel tank encased in spray-foam. (Fig. 4) I was enthralled by how the fluidity of the material softened the shape, enhanced the volume, and gave it a tactile quality. I was also interested in how the form was created out of functionality, since spray foam is an excellent insulator commonly used in Alaska. To make the photograph, I waited until the low midnight sun cast shadows around and up one side of the tank. Dark storm clouds enhanced the singularity of the object by concealing environmental context. The brightness of the tank illuminated in this way imparted an importance to it that commanded respect. Photogravure later enriched the tank's beautiful strangeness even more.

An artist who more outwardly incorporates emotion into his landscape work is William Christenberry. I had the pleasure of listening to him speak about his



Figure 6. William Christenberry, *Church, Sprott, Alabama*, Dye Transfer Print, 1971.

photographs of rural Alabama when he visited our photography class at the University of Virginia in 2005. I could see that his sincere, gentle demeanor allowed him the humility to better embrace the landscape. Christenberry acknowledges our humanity and captures the human qualities he finds in objects and buildings. His

sentiment is then transferred to us through his work:

The stray fragments and fugitive bits of life that find their way into his are transformed into votive objects that coax forth memories and desires. They claim a native place in the often-divided worlds of fine art, vernacular art, and daily life, suggesting the possibility that those conventional divisions may obscure a unifying continuum.²

Perhaps Christenberry's democratic approach is what gives his work such a timeless and familiar quality. For instance, he isolates buildings to enhance distinct forms like the "proud" bell towers of a church in Sprott County. (Fig. 6) He explains, "What I really feel very strongly about, and I hope is reflected in all aspects of my work, is the human touch, the humanness of things, the positive and sometimes the negative and sometimes the sad."³ The preciousness of even the smallest, disposable objects do not go unnoticed by him, even flower grave decorations made out of Styrofoam egg cartons.⁴ Christenberry's photographs serve as indirect representations of people by depicting the objects they produce, what they leave behind, how objects are altered by time and nature.

My work attempts to show the ingenuity of Alaskans through the objects. In *Scarecrow*, I was attracted to the household materials used to scare pests away from a garden. (Fig. 7) As I stood next to the compost pile and salmon carcasses used as fertilizer, I noticed that a piece of a gillnet was used as a trellis for the peas. To my delight, after I enlarged the image I also saw that the scarecrows were made from *quspuks*, a traditional garment commonly worn by the Yup'ik people. The texture captured in the grass and weathered wood somehow made the image more personal, perhaps because I could imagine standing there as I looked at the final print.

² Howard N. Fox, "An Elegiac Vision, in *William Christenberry*," ed. Michael Famighetti. (Italy: Aperature Foundation, Inc., 2006), 196.

³ Michele Norris, *Christenberry Photos Capture the Changing South*. National Public Radio, August 3, 2009, accessed April 25, 2014, <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5613101>.

⁴ William Christenberry, *Egg Carton Flowers on Grave, Hale County, Alabama*, 1977.



Figure 7. Alice Bailey, *Scarecrow*, Copperplate Photogravure, 2014.



Figure 8. Alice Bailey, *Cook Tent*, Copperplate Photogravure, 2014.

During my thesis work, I began to wonder if we project our “humanness” onto objects in order to better relate to place. In the case of *Cook Tent*, I was not sure if I was imagining the canvas’s similarity to a human face or if it actually looked that way. (Fig. 8) I walked by the tent multiple times a day for two weeks until I finally made a photograph. I placed the tent tightly within the frame because nothing

surrounding it seemed relevant, and my focus was on the relationships created by the windows, screen, painted plywood, radio pole, silver tarps, and coil of electric cord. I felt that my intent was successful when other people were drawn to the image “of the tent that looks like a face.”

Early Graduate Work and Photographic Process

I entered the M.F.A. program at the University of Alaska Fairbanks in 2011. My advisor was Charles Mason, a successful photojournalist with an instinctual ability to capture fleeting moments and unique irony. Under Mason’s guidance, I concentrated on further developing my eye and technical skills as a photographer.

During my first year of graduate school, I made environmental portraits of people that I knew. My goal was to learn how to portray each individual’s uniqueness through their physical qualities, expression, and relation to physical surroundings. The first successful image I made in this series was of my friend Shaneé in her painting studio. (Fig. 8) I placed her in front of the canvas she was working on and I tried to wait until her daughter, Emma, was out of the way. After a few failed attempts, I realized that it would be most appropriate to include the girl, even though she would not stop moving. I remember thinking of the importance Frederick Sommer places on using our attention “for acceptance rather than negation;”⁵ in order to best capture the world as “visual field of relationships- a dense web of connections rather than simply one thing at a time”⁶ However, I was surprised by how difficult it was for me to give up complete control of the composition.

The resulting portrait of Shaneé captures a slightly blurred Emma looking down as she walks towards the front of the image. Her indirect gaze helps us look “at” her as one of the elements informing the scene, as opposed to the more direct experience we have with her mother, the primary subject of the image.

⁵ Keith Davis, Frederick Sommer, and April Watson, *The Art of Frederick Sommer: Photography, Drawing, Collage*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 6.

⁶ Keith Davis, in *The Art of Frederick Sommer: Photography, Drawing, Collage*, by Keith Davis, Frederick Sommer, and April Watson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 9.



Figure 9. Alice Bailey, *Shaneé*, Pigment Ink Print, 2011.

Even though I don't always incorporate motion into my work, I continue to look past my preconceptions in order to capture more complex relationships in my photographs. Sometimes I intuitively sense when I have made a successful photograph, and other times I am pleasantly surprised. In the case of *Dancing Pants*, I was attracted to how my friend's black velvet pants hung on the close-line, but I could not pinpoint why. I took a few rolls of film to try different compositions, but I was not sure if I had captured whatever was drawing me to the scene.

After I developed my film and made contact sheets, I instantly spotted the negative that was stronger than the rest. It was similar to the others, except that there was a small space in between one of the pant legs and the post that it was about to blow into. I was not sure if I intuitively clicked the shutter at that moment, but the tension created right there undoubtedly became the focus of the image. The surrounding elements- snow machine, other laundry, and tundra grass- serve as context. I trusted Charles Mason's eye, and he agreed that I definitely had chosen the strongest photograph.



Figure 10. Alice Bailey, *Dancing Pants*, Copperplate Photogravure, 2014.

My experience with *Dancing Pants* illustrates how editing plays such a vital role in the process of photography. Two bodies of work of the exact same place could have completely different meanings depending on which images are chosen. Mason continued to guide me through my thesis project as I tried to decipher the impact made by subtle differences in my negatives. He also encouraged me to “live with” my photographs for a while to see how I responded to them over time. Sometimes an image lost its potency after I subconsciously considered it while passing it on the wall, in which case I knew it was time to re-examine my contact sheets to see if there was a better option. If there was not, then I made a mental note of how it could have been more successful and used what I learned the next time I looked through the viewfinder.

Alaskan Influences

At the University of Alaska, I was introduced to other photographs made in Western Alaska. Alex Harris and James Barker made traditional silver gelatin photographs of Eskimo life beginning in the 1970's. Harris's book, *The Last and First Eskimos*, depicts people on the Kobuk River and a few communities on the Bering Sea. Barker's book, *Always Getting Ready*, focuses on daily life on the Yukon-

Kuskokwim Delta and in nearby coastal villages. I was attracted to both titles because each seemed a thoughtful allusion to people's resilience through the inevitable passage of time.

When I met with Barker and his wife Robyn we exchanged stories about our experiences in Bethel. They identified with my fascination with the area and how the jumble of materials provides endless subject matter to study photographically. I admired how Barker's background as a photojournalist enabled him to quickly anticipate and capture moments. One of my favorite images shows a wide-eyed boy about to swing at a blurred baseball headed straight for his head.⁷ The situation is universal, but clues like the boy's rubber boots and the fish rack behind him inform us that we are at a traditional Native Alaskan fish camp. Barker and I discussed how his images describe a specific time and place; whereas my more formal, portrait-like approach to inanimate objects references people more ambiguously through form and composition.

The third photographer who influenced my graduate work, more through process than imagery, was Edward S. Curtis. Previously I had only seen poor reproductions selected from *The North American Indian* series, and was not particularly excited about his work. However, when I looked at his photogravures of Alaskan Natives, I was struck by the impact the prints had on me. I was surprised at how intimate his portraits and landscapes seemed. The matte-surface of the paper, softness of the ink, and embossment made the photographs palpable and inviting. The full tonal range had the richness of a platinum print, yet there was plenty of detail in the shadows. Closer examination revealed equal, if not better, clarity as a straight darkroom or digital print. I was so enamored that I returned to study the work multiple times.

⁷ James Barker, *Simeon Tulik Watches Sam Anthony play Lappball, Umkumiut*, 1993.

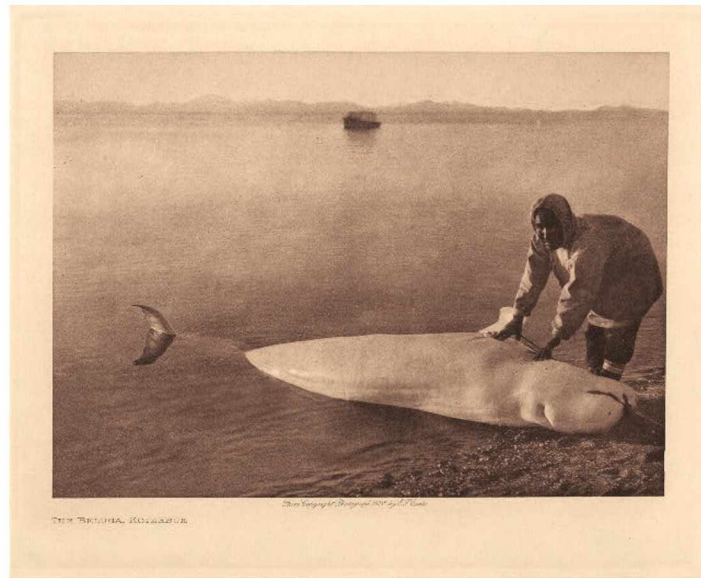


Figure 8. Edward Curtis, *The Beluga, Kotzebue*. Copperplate Photogravure, 1928.

Curtis's gorgeous prints re-affirmed my quest to find the best technique for realizing my negatives. Through experimentation I had found that albumen printing, which involves coating paper with egg whites and gold toner, resulted in rich tonality and detail, but lacked permanence. Platinum-palladium rendered beautiful tonality and softness, but was far too costly for the size enlargements I was using. Traditional darkroom techniques may have been an option, but the first year of my M.F.A. program I had learned how to fine-tune my scanned negatives so well that I did not want to lose this control. However, printing from the computer with pigment ink lacked the depth of more traditional processes because the image existed on the surface of the paper, instead of emerging from within.

Copperplate Photogravure

Even though I had little experience in printmaking, I decided to attend a workshop to learn photogravure from Lothar Osterburg, a master printer and contemporary practitioner of the process. It was here that I first experienced the transformation of the *Pipes* photograph, which inspired me to continue with photogravure after I returned to Fairbanks. (Fig. 2)

In short, the photogravure process transfers a photograph onto light sensitive gelatin tissue, which is then adhered to a piece of copper. The copper plate is etched through the gelatin resist, inked by hand, then printed on a traditional *intaglio* press. (See Figures 9, 10, and 11) Further detail about the process is provided in Appendix B.

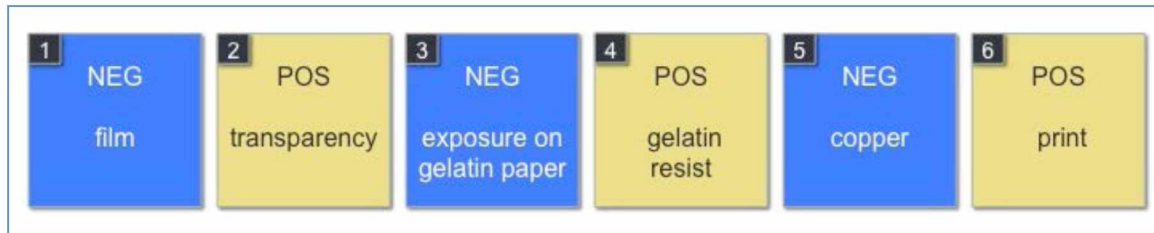


Figure 9. Transformation of photogravure image from negative to positive.



Figure 10. Etching in ferric chloride.



Figure 11. Inking a photogravure plate.

As I was told, the multitude of steps required to make photogravures creates endless opportunities for error. However, I persisted and learned from my mistakes because I had decided to make images from rural Alaska into photogravures for my thesis exhibition. I acquired the necessary chemistry and made a darkroom and etching station at my studio in Fairbanks. The second and third years of my M.F.A. program were dedicated to fine-tuning the process and troubleshooting problems caused by the extremely dry winters of Interior Alaska. In January of 2014, I attended an advanced workshop at Osterburg's studio in Brooklyn, New York, to

better understand etching. As I gained more control of etching, I learned how to manipulate the aesthetics of the images as I made the plates.

Final Aesthetic Decisions

Once I made all the copper plates for my thesis exhibition, I decided on an ink color and paper. Part of why I chose to use photogravure was because of the physicality of hand-inking the plates. The process of wiping the ink also gives each print a painterly quality and subtle subjectivity. To make the ink color, I mixed two different highly pigmented inks together until I had a rich, slightly warm black reminiscent of selenium toning used on darkroom prints. I avoided the sepia color commonly used in historical prints, for I wanted to depict sentiment towards my subjects without nostalgia. The 10x10 inch prints were matted and presented in wood frames stained to complement the richness of the shadows. I chose delicate Japanese *Gampi* paper to enhance the preciousness of the prints. Compared to thicker intaglio papers, the translucent Gampi better conveyed the delicacy and depth inherent to photogravure. I was unsure how I felt about this paper's tendency to slightly wrinkle, but many viewers thought that the wrinkles add to the images and make each print unique.

I decided not to include the portraits I made in Quinhagak and Silvertip Camp because the two images would have detracted from the subtle human presence in the landscapes. One faculty member also commented that one of the photographs conjured the controversy surrounding Edward S. Curtis's work. My intent was to avoid the nostalgia associated with reminiscing of the "lost past," so I knew that the portraits needed further development.

Thesis Exhibition

In April of 2014, I hung fourteen photogravures at Well Street Art Company in Fairbanks, Alaska, as the culmination of my thesis project. I placed different types of subjects juxtaposed to each other to illustrate the unpredictability and randomness with which I initially encountered them. When the room felt balanced, I stepped back and examined how the individual pieces interacted with each other in

the same way that the complexity of people's yards speaks to the richness of Kuskokwim River communities. (See Figures 12 and 13)



Figure 12. Installation shot of *Arctic Entry* exhibition at Well Street Gallery.



Figure 13. Alice Bailey, *Beaver Skin*, Copperplate Photogravure, 2014.

Conclusion

Constant discovery remains the most intriguing part of making photographs. Further developing my senses and technical abilities to render these moments satisfactorily has been the impetus behind the *Arctic Entry* project. For that reason, I am eager to return to the area after I complete my M.F.A. to continue making photographs. As I gain more familiarity with Kuskokwim River communities, I feel compelled to make images of interior spaces. The kitchen is the heart of any home and a place where I often sit to visit and help prepare meals. Dora Esai gave me this

portrait while I was chopping onions for caribou stew and I will most likely accept her invitation to return. (Fig. 14)



Figure 14. Alice Bailey, *Dora*, pigment ink print, 2013.

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Wylie, William. *Carrara*. Chicago: Center for American Places at Columbia College, 2009

Appendix A: Supplemental Materials

Alice M. Bailey

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Education:

- 2014 MFA in Photography, University of Alaska
- 2005 Aunspaugh Fifth Year Fellowship, University of Virginia
- 2004 BA in Studio Art with Photography Concentration, University of Virginia
- 2001 Semester Abroad, *Nepal: Culture and Development*, School for International Training

Teaching Experience

- 2012-2014 Instructor of Record, *Advanced Darkroom*, Spring Semesters, University of Alaska
- 2011-2013 Teaching Assistant, *Digital Darkroom*, Fall Semesters, University of Alaska
- 2012 Instructor, *Basic Color Correction with Photoshop* workshop, Fairbanks Arts Association, Fairbanks, Alaska
- 2012 Teaching Assistant, *Basic Digital Photography*, University of Alaska
- 2011 Teaching Assistant, *Basic Darkroom Photography*, University of Alaska
- 2006-2008 Substitute Teacher, Two Rivers Elementary, Fairbanks North Star Borough School District, Alaska
- 2002-2006 Co-Instructor, Wilderness Leadership Backcountry Courses in Alaska, Puerto Rico, and Virginia; Wilderness Adventures at Eagle Landing
- 2004-2005 Teaching Assistant, McIntire Department of Art, University of

- Virginia
- 2003 Workshop Facilitator, Tim Rollins and K.O.S: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Charlottesville, Virginia
- 2001 Volunteer Teacher, Arya Tara School for Tibetan Nuns, Kathmandu, Nepal

Other Professional Experience:

- 2012 Teaching Artists Training, Fairbanks Arts Association, Fairbanks, Alaska
- 2011 Gallery Coordinator, University of Alaska Art Gallery

Awards:

- 2011-2014 Teaching Assistantship, University of Alaska Art Department
- 2013 Travel Grant to attend *Photogravure Production Workshop* in Brooklyn, New York, University of Alaska Graduate School
- 2012 Tuition Scholarship, *Copperplate Photogravure* workshop, Anderson Ranch Arts Center, Snowmass, Colorado
- 2004-2005 Aunspaugh Fifth Year Fellowship, University of Virginia
- 2003 Tuition Scholarship, *Figure in the Landscape* workshop, Anderson Ranch Arts Center, Snowmass, Colorado

Solo Exhibitions:

- 2014 *Arctic Entry: Kuskokwim River Photogravures*, Well Street Art Company, Fairbanks, Alaska
- 2013 *Portraits: Place & People*, University of Alaska Art Gallery, Fairbanks, Alaska
- 2006 *Facing Sexual Assault*, Surbec Center, Rapid City, South Dakota
- 2005 *Facing Sexual Assault*, Satellite Ballroom, Charlottesville, Virginia
- 2004 *Radford Pinholes*, Fayerweather Gallery, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia

Group Exhibitions:

- 2014 *Portfolio Exchange*, McIntire Department of Art at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia
- 2012 *Latitude 64*, Juried Exhibition, Bear Gallery, Fairbanks, Alaska
- 2012 *Alaska Positive*, Juried Exhibition, Alaska State Museum, Juneau, Alaska
- 2011 *MFA Group Show*, Invitational Exhibition, University of Alaska Art Gallery
- 2010 *Student Art Show*, Juried Exhibition, University of Alaska Art Gallery
- 2005 *Fifth Year Show*, Invitational Exhibition, OFF-Grounds Gallery, Charlottesville, Virginia
- 2004 *6th American Print Biennial*, Juried Exhibition, Marsh Gallery, University of Richmond Museum, Richmond, Virginia

Bibliography:

- 2014 *Masters Students Exhibition*, Fairbanks Daily Newsminer, 4 April 2014
- 2009 *Into the Wild*, University of Virginia Magazine, 11 February 2009
- 2006 *Photos Reveal Victims' Courage*, Rapid City Weekly News, 2006
- 2006 *Photos Try to Tell the Story of Sexual Assault*, The Rapid City Journal, 2006
- 2005 *Bailey's Photos Put a Face on the Healing Process of Sexual Assault*, Inside UVA, 2005

Collections:

- 2013 Anchorage Museum

Artist Statement

My MFA Thesis Project, *Arctic Entry: Kuskokwim River Photogravures*, is the result of three years of making photographs on the Kuskokwim River in Western Alaska. I focused on creating images of subjects I naturally responded to as I walked through Bethel, Quinhagak, and Silvertip Camp. I have used my camera to study the montage of how modern living is punctuated by subsistence tradition, the trappings of domestic life, industrial development, and the inevitable power of nature. The larger goal of my practice as an artist has been developing my ability to notice and act upon these instances of beauty, and then rendering an image which best represents this experience.

The photographs are printed as copperplate photogravures because I wanted to best represent my tactile and emotional experience of the Kuskokwim. My film negatives were enlarged, exposed onto sensitized paper, transferred onto copper, and etched with ferric chloride. I then applied highly pigmented ink to the copper plates, hand-wiped them, and printed them onto delicate *Gampi* paper.

Alice Bailey

“You don’t invent what you photograph. You much more yield to what there is.”

-Frederick Sommer

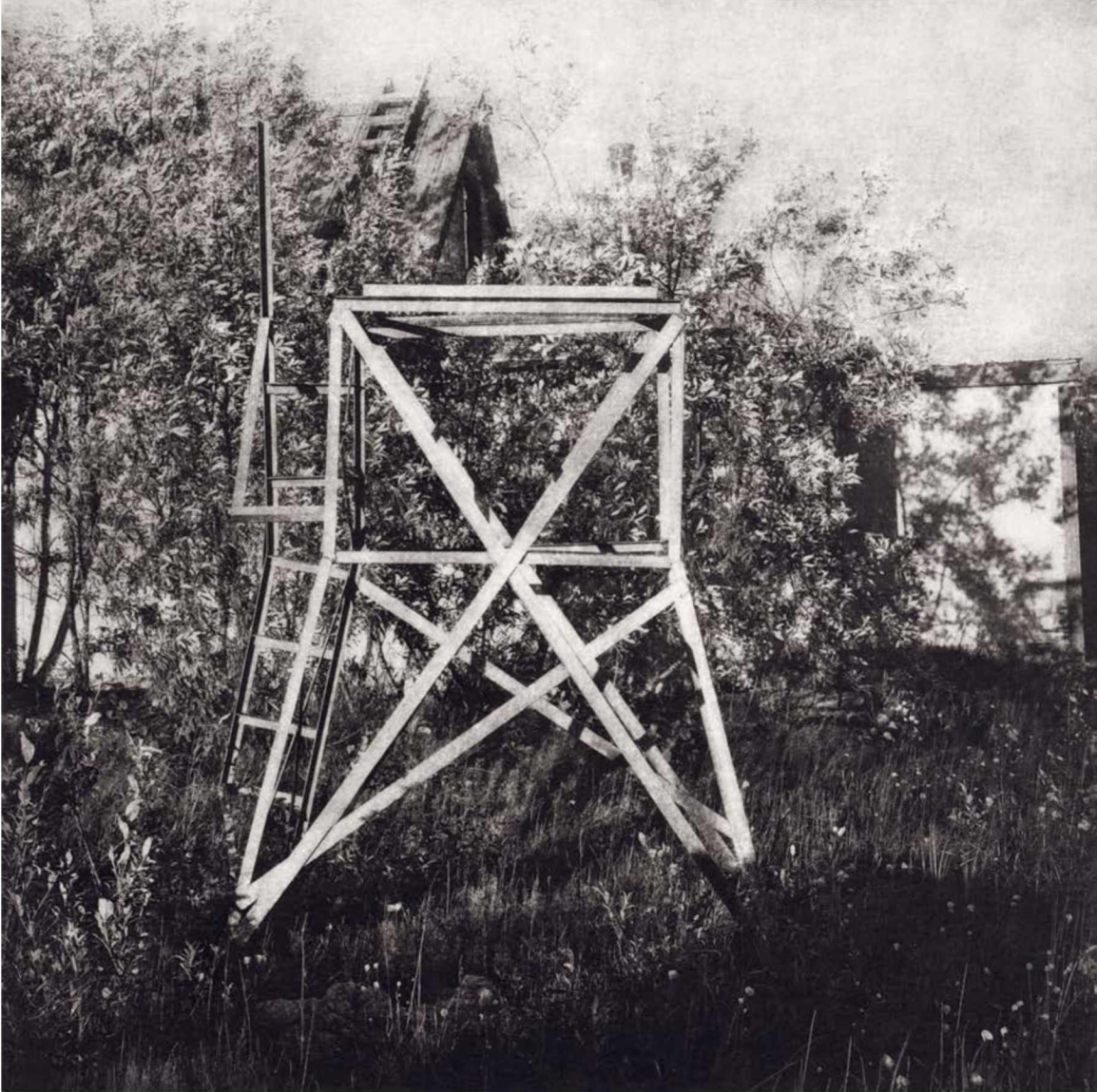
Exhibition Announcements

Images List

1. Alice Bailey, *Pipes*, 10x10 inches, copperplate photogravure, 2014
2. Alice Bailey, *Marshmallow Tank*, 10x10 inches, copperplate photogravure, 2014
3. Alice Bailey, *Tower*, 10x10 inches, copperplate photogravure, 2014
4. Alice Bailey, *Basketball Hoop*, 10x10 inches, copperplate photogravure, 2014
5. Alice Bailey, *Scarecrow*, 10x10 inches, copperplate photogravure, 2014
6. Alice Bailey, *Meat*, 10x10 inches, copperplate photogravure, 2014
7. Alice Bailey, *Tent with Tree*, 10x10 inches, copperplate photogravure, 2014
8. Alice Bailey, *House with Tree*, 10x10 inches, copperplate photogravure, 2014
9. Alice Bailey, *Cook Tent*, copperplate photogravure, 2014
10. Alice Bailey, *Beaver Skin*, copperplate photogravure, 2014
11. Alice Bailey, *Dome House*, copperplate photogravure, 2014
12. Alice Bailey, *Dancing Pants*, copperplate photogravure, 2014
13. Alice Bailey, *Mast*, copperplate photogravure, 2014
14. Alice Bailey, *Swanson's Grocery*, copperplate photogravure, 2014
15. *Arctic Entry* Installation at Well Street Gallery, 2014
16. *Arctic Entry* Installation at Well Street Gallery, 2014
17. Alice Bailey photographing at Silvertip Camp, 2013

















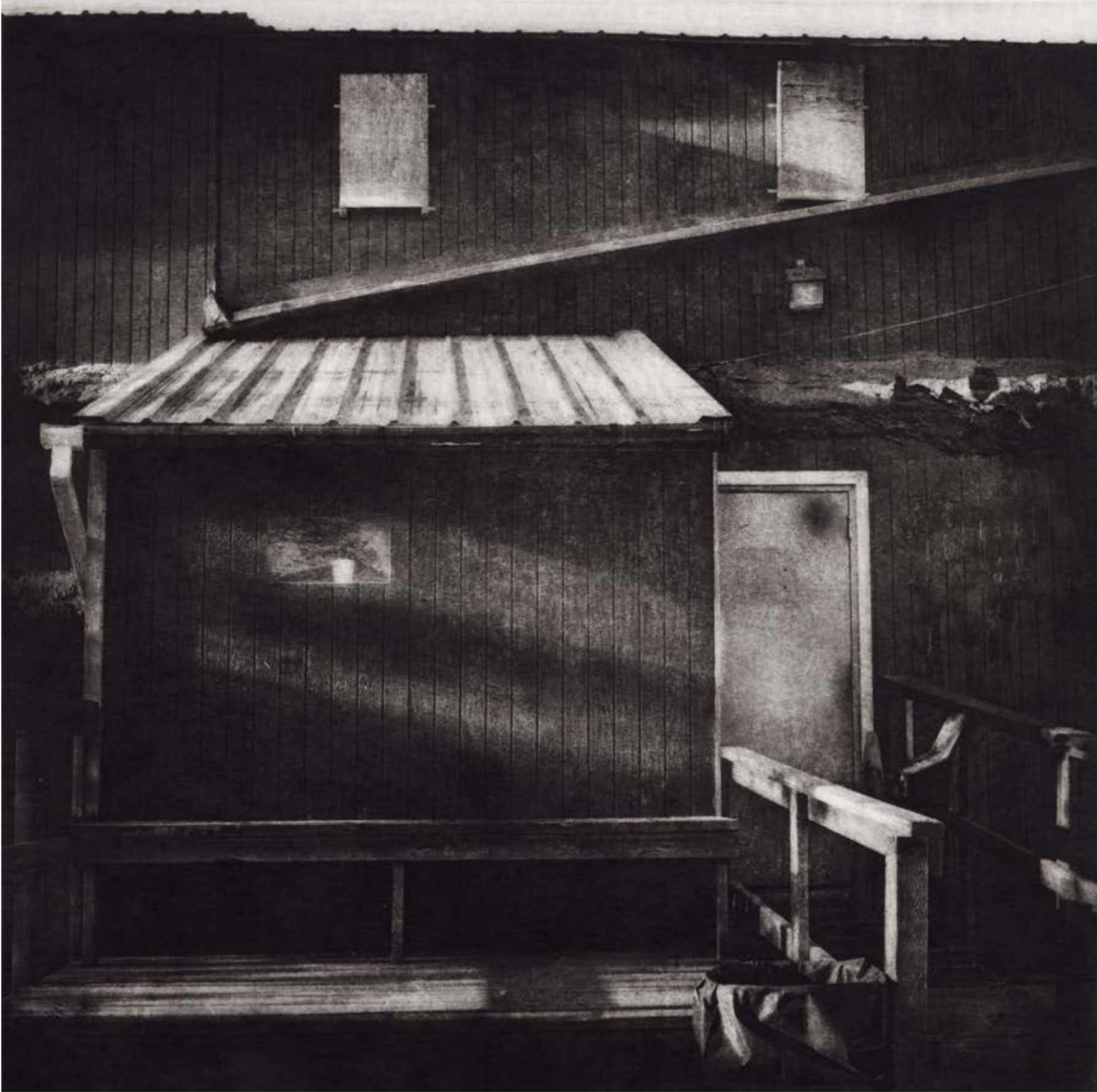


















Thumbnail Guide to CD



1. Alice Bailey, *Pipes*, Copperplate Photogravure, 2014



2. Alice Bailey, *Marshmallow Tank*, Copperplate Photogravure, 2014



3. Alice Bailey, *Tower*, Copperplate Photogravure, 2014



4. Alice Bailey, *Basketball Hoop*, Copperplate Photogravure, 2014



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8. Alice Bailey, *House with Tree*, Copperplate Photogravure, 2014



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11. Alice Bailey, *Dome House*, Copperplate Photogravure, 2014



12. Alice Bailey, *Dancing Pants*, Cook Tent, Copperplate Photogravure, 2014



13. Alice Bailey, *Mast*, Copperplate Photogravure, 2014



14. Alice Bailey, *Swanson's Grocery*, Copperplate Photogravure, 2014

Appendix B: Copperplate Photogravure Process

Copperplate Photogravure Process

Different practitioners of photogravure use slightly different variations of the process. The following steps are what I have found effective for making photogravures in Fairbanks, Alaska. They are compiled from a combination of my personal experience, Jennifer Page's *Pheonix Pigment Paper Info and Processing Guide*⁸ and *Dragon Pigment Paper Info and Processing Guide*⁹, Lothar Osterburg's *Brief Outline of Photogravure Process*,¹⁰ and from notes taken at two workshops with Osterburg.

❖ Review safety precautions and MSDS sheets for all chemicals used. Nitrile gloves and eye protection must be used throughout the process!

STEP 1: SENSITIZING GRAVURE TISSUE

1. Use one or two humidifiers to make your darkroom 60% humidity. Use a high quality hydrometer to maintain humidity throughout the process.
2. With gloved hands, cut tissue larger than image size (12x12" for 10x10" image). Try to handle the tissue by the edges because any flaw will translate onto the copper plate.
3. Prepare sensitizing station:
 - Have foam brush, squeegee ready, spray bottle with distilled water,
 - Turn one tray upside down and place a clean, scratch-free piece of plexi-glass on it. Adjacent to it, have a clean tray for the sensitizing solution.
 - Turn safe-light on (yellow bug light is sufficient)
 - Remove sensitizing solution from refrigerator, pour into tray, and wait until it warms up to 50-55° F.
 - Strength of sensitizer: Use 3.5% potassium dichromate for Pheonix paper and 4.5% potassium dichromate for Dragon paper.

⁸ Jennifer Page, *Pheonix Pigment Paper Info and Processing Guide*, 2013.

⁹ Jennifer Page, *Dragon Paper Info and Processing Guide*, 2013.

¹⁰ Lothar Osterburg, *Brief Outline of Photogravure Process*, 2011.

4. Sensitizing:

- Time depends on temperature of solution (shorter time for warmer solution). Average times are 3 minutes for Pheonix paper and 1.5 minutes for Dragon paper.
- Set timer. Submerge roll of tissue face-up in sensitizer. Start timer.
- As quickly as possible, use the foam brush to unroll the tissue. Gently wipe the surface of the tissue a few times, as well.
- Spray plexi-glass with distilled water to prevent air bubbles.
- As soon as the edges of the tissue uncurl, remove the tissue. It will look mottled on the back if soaked too long.
- Carefully lay the paper facedown on the plexi-glass.
- Hold at the edges and squeegee in all directions, rotating so that the liquid returns to the sensitizing tray.

5. Drying:

- Tape the corners of the tissue to the plexi-glass to prevent curling.
- Filter potassium dichromate solution with a coffee filter or paper towel and return to the refrigerator.
- Use a fan to circulate air in the darkroom. Keep all lights off while drying
- With humidifiers on, my average drying time was about 4 hours.
- When dry, remove tape from the corners of the tissue.
- If properly dried, the tissue should easily peel off the plexi-glass.
- Use scissors to cleanly cut the corners and examine the tissue for flaws.
- Sheets may be stacked together and stored in a light proof plastic bag. Try to keep the tissue as humid as possible before use. Refrigerate and use within 3 days.

STEP 2: TRANSPARENCY

1. Adjust digitalized image with Adobe Photoshop.

- Scan film negatives or import digital photographs. Use “Greyscale mode” at 16-bit. Your final image must be sized to print at 360 dpi.
- Adjust the image’s tonality as if it were going to be a straight print. This will be your starting point for photogravure adjustments. Save as a separate file.
- As a photogravure, the image’s contrast will increase and dark areas may go completely black. Extend the tonality and detail of the shadows. Make sure that the highlights have a slight tone.
- Use a Stouffer scale as a guide. With the “eye-dropper tool”, check if a 50% black area matches Step 6 on the Stouffer scale.
- Optional: Using “Smart Sharpen”, slightly sharpen the image (less than 100%).

2. Make edges

- Flatten all layers. Add 1 inch to one side of the canvas. Make sure that the added area is white. Flatten layers.
- Place a Stouffer scale that is at 360 dpi for your image size on the extension of your canvas. Flatten layers.
- Add a ¼-inch black border on all sides of your canvas. This is called a “safe edge.”
- Apply a curve that darkens the entire image about 10% to increase the amount of ink printed on the final transparency.
- Flip the canvas horizontally. Important, or else your photogravure will be backwards!

3. Print

- Use an archival pigment-ink printer such as an EPSON 3880.
- Place a sheet of Pictorico OHP Transparency Film emulsion side UP on the printer (there should be a notch in the upper right corner from the paper

manufacturer to indicate this). If the plastic grooves on the paper carrier scratch the transparency, line it with regular paper.

- Set color management to “printer manages color” because the final curve applied to the image serves as the printing profile. Take note if this curve needs future adjustments.
- Print quality should be at 2880 dpi at regular speed.

4. Drying

- Hang the transparency to dry overnight. Even in dry climates the transparency retains moisture for hours after printing, which may stick to the gelatin tissue during exposure.

STEP 3: PREPARE COPPER

1. Cut copper 2 inches wider than your image (12x12” for a 10x10” image). You will trim the edges off after etching. Use a file or de-burring tool on the edges of the plate at a 45-degree angle.
2. Buff with Putz Pomade until mirror-like. If there are any large scratches use sandpaper and water, then polish again. Deep scratches may require polishing by machine.
3. Degrease plate with calcium carbonate (whiting) and 10% ammonia solution. It works best to pre-mix the whiting and ammonia in a separate container, then apply it to the plate when it is a toothpaste-like consistency. Degreasing is VERY important, do it at least 3 times.
4. Wash degreaser off and make sure no residue is left behind. Dry the plate immediately and store safely.

STEP 4: EXPOSURE (with aquatint screen)

1. Purchase an analogue aquatint screen from Cape Fear Press, the only company to make them by hand specifically for photogravure. *The screen replaces a traditional pine rosin aquatint. Please see instructions for rosin aquatint at the end of this document.**

2. Clean the glass on the UV Light box. Do test exposures of aquatint screen and transparency to figure out the proper exposure time. The exposure unit in the UAF printmaking studio works with Dragon paper sensitized with 4.5% Potassium Dichromate for 375 LU (light units) for the aquatint screen, followed by 350 LU for the transparency. Always use 10% more LU for the aquatint screen, otherwise the aquatint will fail before etching is complete.
3. Turn the regular lights off and use only a red or yellow safelight from this point on. It is now safe to remove the sensitized paper from the light proof bag, but wait as long as possible to do this because it will dry out immediately, curl, potentially crack, and become extremely difficult to position in the light box.
4. Once you have the exposure times figured out, place the aquatint screen emulsion side UP, with the sensitized gelatin paper facedown on top of it. Be careful not to touch the middle of the gelatin because the heat from your hand will damage it.
5. Position vacuum hoses so that they are not sticking out from under the lid. Gently lower the lid, making sure that nothing slips, and latch it closed.
5. Set the vacuum at 20 Light Units (LU) and the exposure time at 375 LU. Press “start” and do not look directly at the UV rays.
6. When the first exposure is complete, remove the aquatint screen and replace it with the transparency emulsion side UP (notches in upper right corner and image looks as you printed it). Position vacuum hoses, latch lid, and expose.
7. After both exposures are complete TRIM the gelatin paper. Under the safe light you will be able to see the outer border on which to cut. Be careful not to cut the inner border or image. If you forget to trim the paper it will be too big for your copper plate.
8. Put the exposed paper back into the lightproof plastic bags. Prepare to transfer onto the copper.

STEP 5: TRANSFER

1. It is a good idea to humidify the darkroom at this point. Even though humidity is not specifically necessary for the transfer, it will be after developing.

2. Use a transfer solution of 50% isopropyl alcohol for Pheonix paper and plain distilled water or a solution of 25% isopropyl alcohol for Dragon paper. Keep the solution refrigerated until use.
3. Using the same set up as sensitizing (but a tray that has not had potassium dichromate in it), pour the transfer solution into the tray and wait until it warms up slightly.
4. Turn safelight on.
5. Unroll the paper facedown, then flip when it is completely wet. With larger images it may be too difficult to unroll it facedown first. Work quickly so that the paper soaks evenly.
6. Meanwhile, spray the copper with distilled water. For Pheonix paper, applying a bead of transfer solution also works. However, the Dragon paper is much more prone to bubbles.
7. Remove the paper from the transfer solution as soon as the curl relaxes. **THIS HAPPENS QUICKLY SO BE READY.** Over-soaking it will result in blotchiness that will show up in the final plate.
8. Place the paper facedown onto the copper, making sure all edges are on the plate. You have a couple seconds to slide it around once it is on the plate. Hold at the edges and squeegee in all directions, rotating so that the liquid returns to the tray.
9. Wait 10 minutes before developing. If you want, you can place the plate under flat weight to help adhesion.

STEP 6: DEVELOP

1. In addition to the gloves that you should already have on, use eye protection because of splashing.
2. You will need water that is 110° -120° F. If the tap water does not get hot enough, supplement with an electric hot pot.
3. Place the plate in a tray with hot water for 30 seconds to 1 minute, agitating slightly. Push up one corner with your finger and **SLOWLY** peel off the entire paper

from the corner in a continuous motion. Immediately throw the paper into the trash.

4. Agitate the tray for 7 more minutes, periodically replacing the hot water. Pour into the corner of the tray and not directly on the image.

- If you are using Dragon paper, the image may not develop with agitation alone. After 4 minutes of developing, put slightly cooler water into the tray. Using a sable hair watercolor brush, VERY LIGHTLY brush the entire image to dislodge some of the unexposed gelatin. Dump out and return to agitating with hot water.

5. After 7 minutes of agitation, pour cool water into the tray to harden the gelatin. Leave the plate here while you prepare the next step.

STEP 7: DRYING

1. For Pheonix paper, prepare one tray with 50% isopropyl alcohol and one tray with 99% isopropyl alcohol. Dragon paper only requires one tray with 50% isopropyl alcohol.

2. For Pheonix paper, place the tray in 50% isopropyl alcohol for 1 minute, drain well, then leave in the 99% solution for 7 minutes. Soak Dragon paper in the 50% solution for 7 minutes. In either case, agitate the tray occasionally.

3. The alcohol dries quickly and even drying is essential. Remove the plate, drain, and place on paper towels. Immediately wipe GENTLY and QUICKLY with the flat edge of folded paper towels in all directions in order to spread the liquid evenly on the surface. Then take the roll of paper towels and wipe in one direction. Use a hairdryer set on cool to finish drying, spinning the plate simultaneously on a Lazy Susan if you have one. Keep drying until all puddles of liquid are gone.

4. Wait two hours before applying a traditional rosin aquatint. If not, skip to curing the plate overnight in a humid environment (50% humidity is good).

STEP 8: ETCHING

1. Paint shellac on the edges of the plate and area surrounding the image. Adhere plastic laminate on the back, or paint with asphaltum. Wait until dry, then make handles on two sides of the plate with masking tape. Cover any holes in the gelatin with shellac to prevent deep holes etched there.
2. Etching photogravures is different than regular intaglio etching because it requires a series of ferric chloride baths of different strengths. Start with 48 Baume (Be) and dilute with DISTILLED water. Measure ferric chloride solutions with a hydrometer and graduated cylinder to these strengths: 46° Be, 45° Be, 44° Be, 43° Be, 42° Be, 41° Be, 40°Be, and 39°Be. Line up trays for each of these baths. You will also need a pencil, the *Photogravure Etching Sheet* (included at the end of this document) on a clipboard, and a timer.
3. Use the Stouffer scale and etching sheet to guide the etching speed. The entire etch should take from between 25-45 minutes. The gelatin will dissolve from the water in the ferric chloride if it is left in much longer than that.
 - Fill out the etch sheet with “estimated times” at each step. Generally, the times for each step on the Stouffer scale will decrease as you progress from the shadows to the highlights.
 - Place the plate in the 46° Be bath. Start the timer and record how long it takes to start etching, which will be evident by slight dulling or black residue. At this point, the traces of water in the ferric chloride have permeated the gelatin. Make a note of this time, but do not factor it into your total etch time.
 - Look for the line in between 100% and 90% on the Stouffer scale. Stop the timer when the line is visible (which means the whole 90% square has totality as well), which indicates that 100% has fully begun to etch. If 100% has not etched within 10 minutes, moves the plate to 45°Be until it does. Record the time.
 - Start over your timer and keep it going throughout the rest of the etch. Now you are waiting for the line in between 90% and 80% to appear

(which means the whole 90% square has totality as well). Unlike the rest of the steps on the scale, it is alright for 90% to take a long time, even up to 20 minutes. The longer it takes, the more shadow detail you will have. Record the time.

- Now try to strictly adhere to the times you have estimated on your etch sheet. Generally, the time for the 80% will be about 7 minutes and each step will take less time as you progress. The 10% and 5% steps may take less than a minute.
- Remember to be pro-active in order to achieve the estimated etch times: you are making the etch happen how you want, not waiting for it to. If you are “stuck” on a step, move to the next strongest bath, but try to avoid changing baths on every step because that means you are etching too fast.
- Lothar Osterburg uses the analogy of a large ship anticipating an iceberg and gradually steering away in plenty of time, as opposed to waiting and completely stopping. Like a large ship, the etch will take time to slow down, then will be difficult to start again.¹¹
- If you think that the image is lost at the 10% mark, wait another minute before pulling it out. Look at the image and not the scale if necessary.

4. After etching is complete, rinse the plate with water. Use a mixture of vinegar and salt to remove the gelatin. Clean off the shellac and contact paper backing. At this point the image is permanent.

STEP 9: PRINTING

1. Gently polish with Putz Pomade diluted with mineral to remove tarnish and brighten the highlights.
2. Prepare paper and ink for printing. Your photogravure plate will be printed like any other intaglio plate.

¹¹ Lothar Osterburg, *Photogravure Production Workshop*, Brooklyn, New York, 2014.

*TRADITIONAL ROSIN AQUATINT: To be applied on top of the cured gelatin before etching, instead of exposing an aquatint screen.

- Use an aquatint box that is cleaned of other types of rosin. Place the plate on a piece of stiff cardboard at least 2 inches wider than it on all sides. Grind the rosin with a coffee grinder into a powder.
- Experiment with amount of rosin and time in the box to determine what works for your situation. Your goal is for 50%-60% rosin coverage. The plate will look too dusty initially because the rosin shrinks when it melts. Use a loupe and flashlight shining from the side to examine the dust coverage before/during/after melting.
- Larger copper plates sometimes melt unevenly because the edges curl. In this case, and if your hot plate melts unevenly even on small plates, build a wood box to serve as an “oven” for the melt. The disadvantage of using a box is that you cannot watch the melt, but experimentation will help determine how long it takes for it to be in there.
- Lothar Osterburg describes proper aquatint coverage and melting as follows:¹²
 - The dustiness should disappear when melted, but if the copper begins to look shiny it is over-melted.
 - A proper melt should make the rosin dust look like water droplets: not flat “pancakes” (too melted) and not completely round (not melted enough).
 - When the plate cools, test it by running your finger over the edge (not on the image). There should be no dusty trail.
 - If the aquatint coverage is too high, under-melt it slightly. If the aquatint coverage is too low, over-melt it slightly.
 - Cure before etching.

¹² Lothar Osterburg, *Copperplate Photogravure Workshop*, Anderson Ranch Arts Center, Snowmass, Colorado, August 2012.

PHOTOGRAPHURE ETCH SHEET

IMAGE: _____ Attempt # : _____ Tissue: _____ Date: _____ Location: _____

Aquatint Screen LU: _____ Image LU: _____

STEP	TIME	BAUME		Minutes at step	Ideal
Start etch					
100%					
100% 11	0:00				
90% 10					
80% 9					
70% 8					
60% 7					
50% 6					
40% 5					
30% 4					
20% 3					
10% 2					
5% 1					
0% 0					
TOTAL		Other Notes:			